

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MUSCAT 00189 01 OF 04 120715Z

12

ACTION NEA-09

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R 120459Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 867

USDOC WASHDC

AMEMBASSY DOHA

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 4 MUSCAT 189

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EIND, EMAE, EINV, BTIC

SUBJECT: OMAN INDUSTRIALIZATION PLANS

SUMMARY. DURING RECENT MEETING WITH NEWLY APPOINTED UN INDUSTRIAL ADVISOR TO OMAN ABBAS H. ELGHOSSEINI, LATTER REVEALED 39 INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS ARE EITHER UNDERWAY OR UNDER CONSIDERATION. THIS INFORMATION SHOULD BE OF PRIME IMPORTANCE TO APPROPRIATE U.S. CONTRACTORS AND SUPPLIERS OF MACHINERY AND MATERIALS. ACTION ALSO REQUESTED CERTAIN INFO ADDRESSEES (PARA 5). END SUMMARY.

1. UN INDUSTRIAL ADVISOR TO OMAN, ABBAS H. ELGHOSSEINI, REPORTS LARGE NUMBER INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS ARE UNDERWAY OR UNDER CONSIDERATION. HE CATEGORIZES PROGRESS ACCORDING TO FOLLOWING SCALE:

- (1) OPPORTUNITY STUDY
- (2) FEASIBILITY STUDY
- (3) GOVERNMENT APPROVAL
- (4) SITE SELECTION
- (5) PREPARING TECHNICAL AND CONSTRUCTION SPECIFICATIONS
- (6) CONTRACTING FOR MACHINERY AND BUILDING CONSTRUCTION

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PAGE 02 MUSCAT 00189 01 OF 04 120715Z

(7) LAND PREPARATION AND INSTALLATION OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

- (8) BUILDING CONSTRUCTION
- (9) DELIVERY OF MACHINERY
- (10) INSTALLATION AND TESTING OF MACHINERY
- (11) INITIAL PRODUCTION RUNS

2. PROJECTS, THEIR PRESENT STAGE OF PROGRESS, AND OTHER
COMMENTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

CEMENT FACTORY - STAGE 5. A JOINT VENTURE BETWEEN GOVERNMENT, ASSOCIATED PORTLAND CEMENT MANUFACTURERS (U.K.) AND CEMENTIA AG (SWISS). CONSTRUCTION WILL BE UNDERTAKEN BY SIR GEORGE WIMPEY (U.K.) ANTICIPATE CAPACITY IN RANGE OF 250,000 TONS PER ANNUM. COMPANY HAS BEEN AWARDED MONOPOLY ON LOCAL CEMENT PRODUCTION FOR 20 YEARS.

ASBESTOS CEMENT PIPES - STAGE 6. JOINT VENTURE BETWEEN OMANI, SUHAIL BAHWAN, AND ETERNIT SA (FRENCH). POSSIBILITY LOCAL ASBESTOS SUPPLY STILL BEING INVESTIGATED.

LOCAL MARBLE PRODUCTION - STAGE 6. ELGHOSSEINI CLAIMS MARBLE IN SUFFICIENT QUANTITY LOCATED 120 KM NW MUSCAT, ON BATINAH SIDE OF MOUNTAINS. SAMPLE APPEARED TO EMBOFF OF PASSABLE BUT MODEST QUALITY. DEVELOPMENT UNDERTAKEN BY LOCAL NASIR COMPANY, HERETOFORE UNKNOWN TO EMBASSY.

FERTILIZER FACTORY - STAGE 3. PREVIOUSLY REPORTED VENTURE BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND GAZOCEAN (FRENCH) ESTIMATED VALUE \$400 MILLION. AZAIBA MOST LIKELY SITE. WE HAVE SEVERAL REPORTS PROJECT UNDERGOING REEXAMINATION FOR FEASIBILITY. CAPACITY ANTICIPATED (BY OTHER SOURCES) REPORTEDLY 2,000 TONS PER DAY. PRESENT OMAN NATURAL GAS PRODUCTION CURRENTLY FLARED APPROXIMATELY 220 MCFD.

LPG PLANT - STAGE 3. PREVIOUSLY REPORTED JOINT VENTURE BETWEEN TESORO PETROLEUM (U.S.) AND GOVERNMENT, VALUED AT \$100 MILLION. LIKewise HAVE RECEIVED REPORTS FEASIBILITY BEING REEXAMINED.

REFINERY - STAGE 3. ELGHOSSEINI REPORTS INFORMATION THIS PROJECT BEING CLOSELY HELD BY SULTAN HIMSELF.
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PAGE 03 MUSCAT 00189 01 OF 04 120715Z

PETROCHEMICAL INDUSTRY - STAGE 3. ELGHOSSEINI REPORTS INFORMATION THIS PROJECT BEING CLOSELY HELD BY SULTAN HIMSELF. AN FNCB REP REPORTED HE HAD HEARD CHASE MANHATTAN WAS INTERESTED IN FINANCING SUCH A PROJECT.

DAIRY PLANTS - TWO PLANTS AT PRESENT, BOTH STAGE 6.
GOVERNMENT HOPES TO ENCOURAGE SEVERAL OF THESE PLANTS

THROUGHOUT COUNTRY. OF PRESENT TWO, ONE IS OWNED BY OMANI PRIVATE INTERESTS (ELGHOSSEINI DIDN'T KNOW NAMES) AND SECOND BY QATARI MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS SHAIKH MOHAMMAD BIN HAMID AL THANI. THESE PLANTS WILL RECONSTITUTE POWDER PENDING DEVELOPMENT SUFFICIENT LOCAL RESOURCES. PLANS INCLUDE COLD STORAGE FACILITIES AT DISTRIBUTION POINTS.

DATE PROCESSING PLANTS - STAGE 10. LOCATED AT ROSTAQ AND NIZWA, CONSTRUCTED BY FMC (U.S.) WHOLLY OWNED BY GOVERNMENT. FMC HOPES TO PROCESS 1975 JULY-AUGUST DATE CROP, THOUGH THIS PLAN HAMPERED BY INABILITY LOCATE SATISFACTORY LABORERS, DIFFICULTY IN INSTRUCTING DATE GROWERS QUALITY CONTROL TECHNIQUES AND NEED TO DISCOURAGE THEIR TENDENCY TO SELL DATES TOO EARLY IN ORDER TO OBTAIN MONEY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

COMPACT CANNERIES - STAGE 10. LOCATED SOHAR AND SALALAH, BUILT BY FMC, WHOLLY OWNED BY GOVERNMENT. FMC REP ADMITTED IN CONFIDENCE THESE PLANTS BUILT SO FAR IN ADVANCE OF DEVELOPMENT LOCAL PRODUCT SUPPLY THAT AT PRESENT THEY CAN BE CONSIDERED USEFUL ONLY AS PUBLICITY ON OMANI DEVELOPMENT.

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PAGE 01 MUSCAT 00189 02 OF 04 120725Z

21

ACTION NEA-09

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R 120459Z FEB 75
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 868
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AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 4 MUSCAT 189

FLOUR MILL - STAGE 4. BEING BUILT ADJACENT TO PORT FOR LOCAL BUSINESSMAN BY UNNAMED FRENCH COMPANY. AS PART OF

PROJECT GOVERNMENT HAS CONTRACTED SAME COMPANY TO BUILD 30,000 TON GRAIN STORAGE FACILITY, A SIZE WE BELIEVE TO BE FAR IN EXCESS OF NEEDS.

LIME BRICKS - STAGE 1. AN UNNAMED FRENCH COMPANY BELIEVES IT CAN MAKE BRICKS OUT OF LOCALLY AVAILABLE LIME BY ADDITION OF A FIXATIVE BASED ON AN ALUMINUM SALT.

RAW COPPER MANUFACTURE - STAGE 1. DEVELOPMENT DEPENDS UPON LOCATING SUFFICIENT RESERVES BY PROSPECTION LTD. (CANADA) ON BEHALF MARSHALL EXPLORATION (U.S.). ELGHOSSEINI CLAIMS OMAN DESTINED TO BECOME ONE OF WORLD'S MAJOR COPPER PRODUCERS. SECOND SOURCE QUOTES FORMER PROSPECTION LOCAL MANAGER AS SAYING HE BELIEVES QUALITY AND QUANTITY RIVALS AFRICAN SOURCES. HOWEVER OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH DEPT. OF MINERALS PLACE CURRENT ESTIMATES AT SEVEN MILLION TONS 2.5 PERCENT ORE IN TWO MOST PROMISING-LOOKING BODIES, OR STILL SOMEWHAT SHORT OF ECONOMICALLY RECOVERABLE QUANTITIES. AMERICAN FIRMS UTAH INTERNATIONAL AND NEWMONT MINING HAVE EXPRESSED INTEREST IN THIS PROJECT.

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PAGE 02 MUSCAT 00189 02 OF 04 120725Z

SPONGE IRON MANUFACTURE - STAGE 1. ELGHOSSEINI SAYS GOVERNMENT HAS RECEIVED PRELIMINARY INDICATION OF INTEREST FROM CONSORTIUM OF W. GERMAN, BRITISH, AND BRAZILIAN INTERESTS, USING OMANI NATURAL GAS AND BRAZILIAN PELLETIZED ORE.

COLD STORAGE FACILITIES - STAGE 1. PLANNED AS WHOLESALE DISTRIBUTION CENTERS FOR FROZEN AND CHILLED PRODUCTS AT PORT QABOOS AND MAJOR TOWNS. MAY BE AWARDED IN PART TO FMC/DEL MONTE IN CONTEXT OF NEW AGRICULTURE OR FISHING CONTRACTS.

SUGAR PLANT - STAGE 1. THIS PROJECT AWAITING RESULTS OF WATER SURVEYS BY SIR ALEXANDER GIBB (U.K.) DUE NOW, AND DECISIONS CONCERNING LAND UTILIZATION FOR AGRICULTURE. IDEA A FAVORITE OF INDUSTRY UNDERSECRETARY BARAKAT LAMKI. IN OUR OPINION, THIS IS TOTALLY UNECONOMIC IN ABSENCE INEXPENSIVE LABOR AND IN VIEW OF LIKELY WATER SHORTAGE.

VEGETABLE OIL FACTORY - STAGE 1. FAO CURRENTLY TESTING POSSIBILITY RAISING OILSEEDS IN OMAN.

LIVESTOCK FEEDSTUFFS - STAGE 1. FAO AND DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE CURRENTLY TESTING CROPS SUITABLE FOR PELLETIZED FEEDSTUFFS.

POULTRY FARMS - STAGE 1. THOUGH TWO SMALL PRIVATE OPERATIONS UNDERWAY, ONE OWNED BY TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE DIRECTOR MOHAMMAD HASSAN ALI, GOVERNMENT INTERESTED IN STARTING AT LEAST THREE ADDITIONAL LARGE OPERATIONS. PRESENTLY NEITHER

FEED GRAIN NOR PROTEIN SOURCE LOCALLY AVAILABLE, THOUGH THERE IS SOME POSSIBILITY OF PELLETIZING ALFALFA AND SUING FISH BYPRODUCTS FOR SUITABLE, IF LESS THAN PERFECT, INTERIM SOLUTION.

PEPSI COLA PLANT - STAGE 10. FINANCED BY LOCAL BUSINESS INTERESTS, THIS PLANT SOON EXPECTED TO JOIN WHAT APPEARS TO BE SUCCESSFUL ROYAL CROWN OPERATION. IMPORT OF PRODUCTS ALSO PRODUCED BY LOCAL FACTORIES HAS BEEN FORBIDDEN. RC PLANT HAS BROUGHT \$3.00 PER CASE REDUCTION FROM CANNED BEVERAGE COSTS TO LOCAL CONSUMERS (THOUGH, AT \$4.20 PERHQASE, ABOUT 10 PERCENT HIGHER THAN IMPORTED BOTTLED PEPSI FORMERLY AVAILABLE ON OCCASION).

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PAGE 03 MUSCAT 00189 02 OF 04 120725Z

GLASS PRODUCTION - STAGE 1. ELGHOSSEINI REPORTS ALL MATERIALS LOCALLY AVAILABLE IN SUFFICIENT SUPPLY, LOCAL BUSINESSMEN KAMAL DAWOOD OF GENERAL TRADING CO. AND YAHYA MOHAMMAD NASIB SEARCHING FOR JOINT VENTURE PARTNERS. ENVISAGE STARTING WITH PRODUCTS FOR HOME USE SUCH AS GLASSES, FOLLOWED BY PRODUCTION OF BOTTLES FOR BEVERAGE PLANTS, THEN PRODUCTION WINDOW GLASS.

WASTE UTILIZATION - STAGE 1. ELGHOSSEINI REPORTS GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN APPROACHED BY LOCAL FIRM SEEKING APPROVAL FOR PLANT TO UTILIZE TRASH PRIMARILY AS AN ENERGY OR FERTILIZER SOURCE. EMBASSY RECENTLY CONTACTED BY AMCIT THOMAS GREENE, OMAN INTERNATIONAL CORP., REQUESTING NAMES OF ENGINEERING CONSULTANTS OR OTHER FIRMS WHO WOULD BE ABLE TO ASSIST IN SUCH A PROJECT.

VITREOUS PLUMBING FIXTURES - STAGE 1. ELGHOSSEINI BELIEVES SUFFICIENT QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF CLAY EXISTS LOCALLY FOR THIS PROJECT. EMBASSY QUITE SURE LOCAL DEPOSITS HAVEN'T BEEN SUFFICIENTLY SURVEYED TO PERMIT SUCH DETERMINATION. WE SEE MORE REALISTIC POSSIBILITY FOR CLAY PIPE THAN FOR PROJECT AS PRESENTLY CONCEIVED.

FURNITURE FACTORY EXPANSION - STAGE 1. INDUSTRY MINISTER MOHAMMAD ZUBAIR HAS ALREADY BEGUN ASSEMBLY PLAN FOR WOODEN FRAME FURNITURE, REPORTEDLY SUCCESSFUL. ELGHOSSEINI HOPES TO ENCOURAGE EXPANSION OF THIS FACILITY PARTICULARLY TO INCLUDE PRODUCTION OF STANDARD DSIZE WOODEN DOORS.

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PAGE 01 MUSCAT 00189 03 OF 04 120733Z

21

ACTION NEA-09

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R 120459Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

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AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 3 OF 4 MUSCAT 189

POPULAR FOOTWEAR FACTORY - STAGE 1. INITIALLY SEEN FOR PRODUCTION OF SANDALS AND OTHER EASILY PRODUCED LEATHER ITEMS USING IMPORTED MATERIALS. EVENTUALLY SUFFICIENT LOCAL LEATHER FROM GOATS, CATTLE AND POSSIBLY CAMELS, MIGHT BE DEVELOPED (WHICH IN TURN WOULD ALSO NECESSITATE A TANNERY).

SOAP FACTORY - STAGE 1. AS WITH SHOE FACTORY, INITIAL PRODUCTION SEEN FROM IMPORTED MATERIALS, TO BE EVENTUALLY SUPPLEMENTED OR REPLACED BY LOCAL SOURCES OF SUPPLY.

NAILS, NUTS AND BOLTS PRODUCTION - STAGE 1. USING IMPORTED IRON AND STEEL RODS.

MATCH FACTORY - STAGE 1. USING IMPORTED MATERIALS, THOUGH SULFUR MIGHT EVENTUALLY BE AVAILABLE AS A BYPRODUCT OF PETROLEUM INDUSTRY.

BATTERY FACTORY - STAGE 1. USING IMPORTED MATERIALS, BOTH FOR TRANSISTOR AND AUTO BATTERIES.

SALT MAKING - STAGE 1. ELGHOSSEINI CLAIMS LARGE SALT DEPOSIT HAS BEEN LOCATED NEAR SUR, THOUGH WE HAVEN'T HEARD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 02 MUSCAT 00189 03 OF 04 120733Z

OF THIS FROM OTHER SOURCES. PROJECT WOULD ENTAIL PURIFICATION AND PACKAGING.

AUTOMOBILE ASSEMBLY- STAGE 1. THOUGH ELGHOSSEINI AS SKEPTICAL AS WE, HE CLAIMS INDUSTRY MINISTER ZUBAIR THINKING SERIOUSLY ABOUT THIS PROJECT, WITH POSSIBLE VIABILITY THROUGH CONTACTS ENLARGING MARKET TO INCLUDE OTHER GULF STATES.

PREFABRICATED BUILDING MATERIALS - STAGE 1. USING OUTPUT FROM CEMENT FACTORY, PRODUCTION OF LIME BRICKS (BOTH DISCUSSED ABOVE), OR OTHER IMPORTED MATERIAL.

FISH PROCESSING - STAGE 1. THOUGH ONE PRIMARY WASHING AND CLEANING FACILITY (WITH CAPACITY IN EXCESS OF LIKELY SUPPLY) ALREADY BUILT AND OTHERS LIKELY IN NEXT YEAR OR SO, ELGHOSSEINI ALSO ENVISAGES CANNERIES ESPECIALLY FOR SARDINES. LATEST AVAILABLE INFORMATION FROM DEL MONTE INDICATES LIKELY SUPPLY OF FISH INADEQUATE FOR EXPORT. SINCE FRESH FISH AVAILABLE YEAR ROUND FOR LOCAL CONSUMPTION, WE DOUBT CANNERY NECESSARY FOR THIS PURPOSE. AT BEST, WE BELIEVE THIS IDEA SHOULD AWAIT FURTHER STUDY.

FISH MEAL FACTORY - STAGE 1. TO BE USED EITHER FOR FERTILIZER OR ANIMAL FEED. PROSPECTS FOR A MODEST FACILITY TO SUPPLY LOCAL MARKET ARE FAVORABLE.

LOBSTER PRODUCTION - STAGE 1. ELGHOSSEINI CLAIMS BRITISH SHIPPING "LARGE QUANTITIES" LOBSTERS (ACTUALLY CRAYFISH LANGOUSTE) FROM RAF MASIRAH BASE TO UK, PROBABLY FOR EXTREMELY LIMITED PRIVATE CONSUMPTION RATHER THAN SALE. THIS IS HARDLY SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE OF QUANTITIES LARGE ENOUGH FOR COMMERCIAL EXPLOITATION. PRELIMINARY FISHING SURVEY RESULTS ALSO TEND TO CONFIRM THIS VIEW.

TURTLE SOUP PRODUCTION - STAGE 1. WHILE GENERALLY KNOWN THAT LARGE TURTLES USE MASIRAH AND OTHER SOUTHERN ISLANDS, ALMOST NO SYSTEMATIC RESEARCH HAS BEEN DONE ON THESE POPULATIONS.

SEA WEED PRODUCTION - STAGE 1. MARDELA INTERNATIONAL (U.S.) PROPOSAL IDENTIFIES SOME QUANTITIES OF SEAWEED SUITABLE FOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 MUSCAT 00189 03 OF 04 120733Z

CARAGEENAN (HYPNEA) AND LOCAL LIVESTOCK CONSUMPTION (SARGASSUM); FIRM PROPOSING FURTHER RESEARCH AND JOINT VENTURE IF FEASIBILITY DEMONSTRATED. AT SAME TIME PROPOSAL ADMITS THESE PRODUCTS MORE EASILY OBTAINABLE IN LARGER QUANTITIES ELSEWHERE, SO WE DOUBT DEVELOPMENT FEASIBLE EXCEPT FOR LIMITED LOCAL USE.

ALUMINUM FRAME ASSEMBLY - STAGE 10. USING IMPORTED SHEETS FOR FABRICATION OF MATERIALS USED IN CONSTRUCTION, PRIMARILY DOOR

AND WINDOW FRAMES. PROJECT WHOLLY FINANCED BY LOCAL
BUSINESSMAN KAMAL DAWOOD.

PLASTICS PRODUCTION - STAGE 1. USING IMPORTED MATERIALS
FOR FORESEEABLE FUTURE.

3. ABOVE-LISTED PROJECTS MOST LIKELY TO SUPPLEMENT
CURRENT MODEST INDUSTRIAL BASE, COMPOSED OF FOLLOWING:

ROYAL CROWN BOTTLING PLANT - MENTIONED ABOVE, OWNED BY
KAMAL DAWOOD, OTHER LOCAL INTERESTS.

GAS PLANT - OWNED BY MOHSIN HAIDER DARWISH, PRODUCING
PRIMARY INDUSTRIAL GASES SUCH AS OXYGEN AND NITROGEN.

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PAGE 01 MUSCAT 00189 04 OF 04 120741Z

13

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INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 4 OF 4 MUSCAT 189

FURNITURE FACTORY - MENTIONED ABOVE, OWNED BY MOHAMMAD
ZUBAIR, PRIMARILY HAND ASSEMBLY OF PATTERNED CUTS OF
WOODEN PARTS.HW

PRINTING PRESSES - ONE OWNED BY GOVERNMENT, OTHER BY
LOCAL BUSINESSMAN ALI SULTAN. NEITHER HAS COLOR REPRODUCTION
CAPABILITY, THOUGH WE ANTICIPATE THIS WILL BE ADDED IN NEAR
FUTURE.

CEMENT BLOCK/BRICK PRODUCTION FACILITY - ONLY PLANT OF REASONABLE DIZE IS OWNED BY SAID MOHAMMAD RAJAB, COUSIN OF COMMUNICATIONS MINISTER ABDUL HAFIDH RAJAB. OTHER PLANTS CAPABLE OF 100 OR SO UNITS A DAY ALSO OPERATING.

FOUNDRY/WORKSHOP - ALSO OWNED BY SAID MOHAMMAD RAJAB, IS ONLY LARGE PRODUCER OF FABRICATED METAL ITEMS SUCH AS STORAGE TANKS, METAL PREFAB HOUSING UNITS (THOUGH SEVERAL SMALLER FACILITIES OPERATING).

4. EMBASSY WILL REPORT FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS THESE PROJECTS AS AVAILABLE. ELGHOSSEINI REPORTS GOVERNMENT WILL FAVORABLY CONSIDER AND STRONGLY SUPPORT PROPOSALS; HOWEVER THERE IS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 02 MUSCAT 00189 04 OF 04 120741Z

DESIRE TO AVOID OFFERS FOR FEASIBILITY STUDIES EXCLUSIVELY AT GOVERNMENT EXPENSE. LOCAL CAPTIAL PARTICIPATION AT LEAST 35 PERCENT, USUALLY 51 PERCENT, CAN BE ARRANGED. ELGHOSSEINI CLAIMS HE AND MINISTRY PREFER U.S. FIRMS.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: FOR CAIRO, PLS REPORT ANY BIOGRAPHIC INFO AVAILABLE ON ELGHOSSEINI WHO STATES HE FORMERLY HELD SENIOR LEVEL POSITION IN EGYPT MINISTRY INDUSTRY AS WELL AS UN ADVISORY POSTS INMIUDAN, SOMALIA; WE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN ASSESSMENT HIS SUCCESS IDENTIFYING AND STARTING ECONOMICALLY FEASIBLE PROJECTS. FOR DOHA, PLS REPORT IF YOU HAVE FURTHER INFORMATION ON DAIRY PROJECT, PARTICULARLY SINCE NOW AT IMPORTANT STAGE EQUIPMENT PROCUREMENT, CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT. FOR WASHINGTON, IN ADDITION TO WHATEVER SUPPORT POSSIBLE FOR OBVIOUS COMMERCIAL IMPLICATIONS THESE PLANS, EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE ASSESSMENT ECONOMICS OF SCALE FOR PROJECTS, PARTICULARLY THOSE RELYING ON IMPORTED MATERIALS, AS WELL AS INFORMATION CONCERNING OTHER POSSIBLE CONSTRAINTS IN OMANI CONTEXT SUCH AS TRAINED MANPOWER OR WATER. COMPANIES INTERESTED THESE PROJECTS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO CONTACT BOTH THE EMBASSY AND ELGHOSSEINI, MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE, P.O. BOX 550, MUSCAT, SULTANATE OF OMAN, TELEX 280 PLANDEV MB.

6. CLASSIFICATION NOTE: GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THESE PLANS IS PUBLICLY AVAILABLE AND CAN BE DISSEMINATED. HOWEVER, ATTRIBUTION OF DETAILS TO ELGHOSSEINI OR THE EMBASSY SHOULD BE AVOIDED EXCEPT IN PRIVATE DISCUSSION WITH ASSURANCES OF CONFIDENCE.
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Message Attributes

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